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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/550,476

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Robert L. Crook

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TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

P.O. Box 560

142. S Main Street

Avilla, IN 46710

EXAMINER

CAMERON, ERMA C

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1792

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DELIVERY MODE

04/15/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/550,476	Applicant(s) CROOK ET AL.	
	Examiner /Erma Cameron/	Art Unit 1792	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 March 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-11 and 31-33 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 12-30 and 34-42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

The previous office action election restriction was made under 35 USC 121 in error as this application is a national stage entry of PCT EP04/50359. The appropriate election restriction is resented below:

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 12-30 and 34-42, drawn to a method of making a fabric.

Group II, claim(s) 1-11 and 31-33, drawn to a fabric.

2. The inventions listed as Groups I and II do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: The current application claims inventions with the technical feature of a polymer particulate dispersed in a batt fiber matrix. Kawashima (6531033) teaches a wet web transfer belt for papermaking that contains a meltable polymer fiber and resin and inorganic filler in a batt fiber layer that extends at least part way into the batt fiber layer.

3. During a telephone conversation between examiner Jennifer Steele and Kelly Bailey on 4/11/2008 a provisional election was made WITH traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 12-30 and 34-42. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to

this Office action. Claims 1-11 and 31-33 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

4. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

5. The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims. Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and the product claims are subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be considered for rejoinder. All claims directed to a nonelected process invention must require all the limitations of an allowable product claim for that process invention to be rejoined.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103 and 112. Until all claims to the elected product are found allowable, an otherwise proper

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restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained.

Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowable product claim will not be rejoined. See MPEP § 821.04(b). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution to require the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.** Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01.

Claim Objections

6. Claims 16, 17, 20, 23, 26, 29 and 39-42 are objected to because of the following informalities: the examiner suggests that decimal points be used instead of commas, per standard US practice. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

7. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

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Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

The applicant has amended one of the binders to be PVU, instead of PU. Besides the fact that neither has been defined, it appears that PVU and PU may not be the same material, and therefore PVU is new matter.

The applicant is requested to cancel new matter.

8. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

9. Claims 12-30 and 34-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

a) Claim 12: it is not clear what is meant by “thermally activating”.

b) Claim 14, 16 and 36; it is not clear if the polymeric material is the same or different as the polymeric material of claim 12.

c) Claim 19: the species should be written out in full, for clarity.

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- d) Claim 19: PVA and PVU have not been defined and are therefor indefinite.
- e) Claim 22: PU and PA have not been defined and are therefor indefinite.
- f) Claim 22: PU and PA should be written in full for clarity.
- g) Claim 22: it is not clear what “strongly” is defined as.
- h) Claim 22: it is not clear what “based” modifies.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

10. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

11. Claims 12, 13, 15, 30, 34 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Kawashima (6531033).

‘033 teaches making a wet web transfer belt from a base layer and batt layer that have been needle punched together, followed by addition of filler F that may be a dispersion of polymeric particles and heating to bond particles and batt. The belt may go thru a nip press (i.e. calendared). See Abstract; Figure 1; 4:26-33; 5:5-15; 7:21-29; 7:66-8:8.

12. Claims 12, 13, 15, 18, 19, 27, 28, 29, 30, 34 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Eklund et al (5298124).

‘124 teaches making a transfer belt for a papermachine by coating a support base of batt needled with a textile. The coating contains a resin such as polyurethane and inorganic or organic particles, as well as a surfactant (at 0.9 wt%), and is cured by heat after application. The belt is put thru a press nip (i.e. calendared). See Abstract; 6:36-54; 8:42-65; 9:37-47; 14:20-16:56.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

13. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

14. Claims 14, 16, 17, 21-29 and 36-42 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawashima (6531033).

‘033 is applied here for the reasons given above.

‘033 teaches that the filler is applied at 5-50wt% (6:54-65), which overlaps with applicant’s claimed ranges.

‘033 does not teach the diameter of the particles, but it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have optimized the particle size as this is known to affect the qualities of the belt being manufactured.

‘033 does not teach additives such as viscosity modifier, anti-settling agent, or wetting agent, but these are conventional additives known to be used in coating of batts for their known properties.

15. Claims 14, 16, 17, 20-26 and 36-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eklund et al (5298124).

‘124 is applied here for the reasons given above.

‘124 teaches that the particles are submicron to 53 microns (15:25-31), which overlaps with applicant’s claimed ranges.

‘124 does not teach additives such as viscosity modifier or anti-settling agent, but these are conventional additives known to be used in coating of batts for their known properties.

Specification

16. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: the section describing the drawings needs the title “Brief Description of the Drawings”.

Appropriate correction is required.

Drawings

17. The drawings are objected to because the figures are not labeled. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either “Replacement Sheet” or “New Sheet” pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Conclusion

18. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to /Erma Cameron/ whose telephone number is 571-272-1416. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-6:00, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Timothy Meeks can be reached on 571-272-1423. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Erma Cameron/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1792

April 14, 2008